

Cockermouth Community-Led Plan Process 2026-27

Frequently-asked questions

WHAT'S THE TIMESCALE FOR OUR PLAN?

We aim to create our plan by autumn of 2027, but if we can go faster or need more time we can be flexible.

- March 2026: Drop-In Visioning Day – development of themes
- March 26 to November 26 – exploring issues and opportunities through widespread consultation
- December 26 to February 2027 – creating the first draft plan
- March to May 2027 – consulting on, and adapting, the draft plan
- June to August 2027 – finalising the plan

Although we have set out three phases for plan development for some aspects it might be possible to define some actions early and start to develop or deliver them quickly while others may require the formation of long-term working groups to be worked through.

WHO WILL DELIVER THE ACTIONS IN OUR PLAN?

This will depend on what is needed. In some cases the town or district council or other organisations may take on an action, existing community organisations may also lead on action or new groups may form to follow things through. The plan will take into consideration people's willingness and ability to take desired actions forward.

CAN A COMMUNITY-LED PLAN INFLUENCE PLANNING DECISIONS?

No. Community-Led Plans do not have 'statutory powers'. However, they can be a foundation for the development of Neighbourhood Plans if the consultation process highlights a specific local interest in, for example, where buildings should go and what they look like, or where open spaces should be protected ('spatial planning').

IS THERE ANY FUNDING FOR OUR PLAN?

There is a small amount of funding to hold engagement activities for the plan to make sure that the whole community is consulted. There is no funding set aside specifically to deliver the actions in the plan. However, funding may be found from existing or new funds or opportunities once priorities have been established by the process.

IS ONE ORGANISATION LEADING THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR PLAN?

Cockermouth Town Council chose to initiate the Community-Led Plan process and set up a Working Group, chaired by Cllr Chris Bridgman, which is now managing the process and reporting back regularly to the Council. The group is made up of volunteers from different organisations in the town and further supported by Action with Communities in Cumbria (ACT).

ARE THERE ANY RULES OR IDEAS ABOUT THE SCOPE OF THE PLAN?

The first phase of the plan development will start to draw this together.

WE ARE A DIVERSE COMMUNITY WITH DIVERSE OPINIONS AND PRIORITIES. HOW CAN WE CREATE ONE PLAN?

The plan process will highlight where there is common concern or interest and solutions or ideas for action can often achieve more than one aim and benefit to those with different interests. We hope to highlight what the community values about the town, what it would like to see in the future, by capturing the widest possible range of views.

Many issues or opportunities will require significant engagement with a range of stakeholders to find a solution. Action may be needed but may be difficult to get right and secure resources.